

## The Times-Dispatch

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 1905.

### Library or No Library.

It is very hard for us to reconcile the  
differences of those esteemed citizens who  
object to accepting Mr. Carnegie's pro-  
posed contribution toward a public library  
for Richmond. Some of them say that the  
one hand that they would be willing to  
accept a free and unconditional gift, but  
that they are not willing that the city  
should obligate itself to comply with Mr.  
Carnegie's terms.

Others say that they are unwilling for  
the city of Richmond to accept such gift  
upon any terms, as it would be putting  
the city under an obligation to an outsider  
upon whose bounty we have no sort of  
claim.

Let us look more closely at the objec-  
tions. Mr. Carnegie has accumulated a  
vast fortune, most of which he has de-  
termined to give away during his life-  
time. To employ the expression of a well  
known Virginia citizen, lately dead, Mr.  
Carnegie is administering on his own  
estate. He made his fortune in America,  
and it is his idea to give it back in great  
part to the people from whom it came;

or to put it another way, to invest his  
money in public institutions which, he  
believes, will be of great benefit intel-  
lectually and morally to the people at  
large. But he is disbursing his money in  
his own way, and making his own terms.  
He is not dealing with Richmond alone,  
but with many cities, and the general con-  
dition is that wherever he invests a sum  
of money in a library it shall be on con-  
dition that the city shall furnish the site  
and by ordinance of council agree to make  
an annual appropriation for maintenance.  
There are positively no other conditions.

It is a simple business proposition. Mr.  
Carnegie proposes to do a certain thing  
provided the city will agree to do its part,  
and if the city does agree, if the city  
complies with his terms, there can be no  
embarrassing obligation in accepting. It  
is a bargain pure and simple, and there  
is no obligation about it. Indeed, the ob-  
jection of most of the objectors is that  
Mr. Carnegie's terms are too harsh, and  
that the city cannot afford to accept them.  
That of itself is conclusive of our con-  
tention that there could be no em-  
barrassing obligation on the part of Rich-  
mond.

But are the terms too harsh. The ob-  
jectors of the latter class argue that we  
would be paying an interest rate of 10  
per cent. on the amount of money which  
Mr. Carnegie proposes to contribute. But  
that objection will not hold, for the ap-  
propriation of \$100,000 a year would be for  
the support of the library, for the pay-  
ment of current expenses, and not a cent  
of it would be paid out on interest ac-  
count. Let us illustrate: Suppose the city  
of Richmond should decline Mr. Carnegie's  
offer and decide to issue bonds amounting  
to \$100,000 to put up the building. The  
city would have to pay the interest on  
those bonds which would be at the rate  
of 4 per cent., and in addition would have  
to make the same appropriation of \$100,000  
a year or more for current expenses. In  
that event we should be paying the same  
amount for expenses that we would be  
paying under the Carnegie plan, and in  
addition we should be paying 4 per cent.  
interest on a debt of \$100,000, which in  
time we should have to discharge. It is  
not necessary to argue that as a business  
proposition it is far better for us to ac-  
cept Mr. Carnegie's offer than to build a  
\$100,000 library on our own account.  
Moreover, everybody knows that a propo-  
sition to issue \$100,000 of bonds to build a  
library for Richmond would not be seri-  
ously entertained in the Council at this  
time, and if Mr. Carnegie's offer is ac-  
cepted it will be many a long day be-  
fore Richmond has a public library.

Therefore, the question sits itself down  
to this: Shall we have a public library or  
not? Shall we accept Mr. Carnegie's offer  
or give up every possible chance, for the  
present at least, of having a public  
library? That is the question for the  
Council to consider. With all respect, the  
substitute propositions amount to nothing.  
It is the Carnegie plan, or no library.

### The Fall of Port Arthur.

The inevitable has come to pass. Port  
Arthur has fallen. General Stoeckel made  
a heroic resistance, and he will go down  
to history as one of the distinguished  
heroes of the twentieth century. It was  
not, as at one time it seemed to be, merely  
a stubborn, purposeless fight-to-the-  
last struggle. There was method in  
the gallant resistance. In holding Port

Arthur he kept a Japanese fleet engaged  
and he kept a large number of Japanese  
soldiers from joining the main army and  
giving additional force against Kuropat-  
kin. He also made the capture an expen-  
sive as possible for Japan, and the price  
to Japan in men and money was enor-  
mous.

In the meantime, he gave the Baltic  
fleet a chance to arrive, and he gave the  
home government valuable opportunity to  
strengthen Kuropatkin's position. True,  
the end came before the Baltic fleet  
reached its journey's end, and we do  
not know how well the Czar has turned  
to good account the opportunity to  
strengthen his position on the fighting  
line in Manchuria. But General Stoeckel  
seems to have done all that mortal man  
could do to delay the fall of Port Arthur  
to the last moment. It is quite certain  
that the victory would have been worth  
more to Japan had it come several months  
earlier.

Be that as it may, however, the sur-  
render of Port Arthur is in the nature of  
a fine New Year's gift to Japan, and it  
must be in high place that the nation re-  
ceives it. This is the second time within  
a few years Japan has taken Port Arthur.  
She captured it from the Chinese on  
November 28, 1894, and when she came to  
settle she demanded the cession in per-  
petuity and full sovereignty, together  
with all fortifications, arsenals and public  
property therein; the Southern part of  
the province of Feng-Tien, the part of  
Manchuria demanded being the territory  
which her soldiers had run over and  
occupied, including Port Arthur. China  
replied yielded, and all this territory was  
actually ceded in the treaty of peace.

But after the manner of diplomacy, Rus-  
sia, Germany and France "advised" Japan  
not to take any part of Chinese territory,  
but only an indemnity in money. Japan  
knew that this bit of "advice" was equi-  
valent to an order from three strong na-  
tions, which she dared not disobey. Of  
course, she yielded, and Russia came  
forward and loaned to China the money  
with which to pay. It was a bitter pill  
for Japan to swallow, but the worst was  
to come. Having ingratiated herself with  
China by making this loan, in 1895 Russia  
leased from China this same Port Arthur  
for a period of twenty-five years. Imag-  
ine Japan's chagrin and indignation when  
this announcement was made. The port  
which she had won as a prize of war,  
and which was so valuable to her in her  
struggle against Russian encroachment,  
the prize which she was forced, through  
Russia's agency, to give up, had now be-  
come a Russian port, and would be a most  
important factor in furthering Russia's  
schemes.

No wonder Japan was indignant, and no  
wonder she made such savage assaults  
upon Port Arthur when war with Russia  
was declared, and no wonder she kept up  
the savage assaults until every Russian  
ship in the harbor was destroyed and until  
the garrison in the fort was compelled to  
surrender; and no wonder that there is  
great rejoicing in Japan to-day that once  
more the coveted prize has fallen into  
her hands.

### The Russian Democracy.

We have upon more than one occasion  
made reference to the Russian democracy,  
and have said that it is a living, ex-  
ecuting force, which the Czar must reckon with.  
It is, according to Dr. Hannis Taylor,  
who writes an instructive article on the  
subject in the January number of the  
North American Review, a greater force  
and a more intelligent force than out-  
siders generally think. Dr. Taylor em-  
phasizes the fact that although Russia is  
an absolute monarchy, the unit of state or-  
ganization is the village community known  
as the "mir," whose constitution is iden-  
tical with that of the Teutonic mark or  
township as it appeared centuries ago;  
that the Russian "mir" as it appears to  
the traveler to-day is a vivid illustra-  
tion of the village life of the founders  
of the English kingdom at the time the  
migration into Britain began.

Says Sir Donald MacKenzie Wallace,  
in his recent book on Russia:

"In the great stronghold of Caesarian  
despotism and centralized bureaucracy,  
these village communities, containing about  
five-sixths of the population, are capital  
specimens of representative government.  
The element of the extreme democratic  
type. When I say that the rural com-  
mune is a good specimen of constitutional  
government, I use the phrase in the En-  
glish, and not in the Continental sense,  
where its constitution is constitutional.  
It is a body of unwritten, tradition-  
al, uncodified, uncodified, uncodified, un-  
codified, uncodified, uncodified, uncodified,  
unmodified themselves under the influ-  
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